

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Currently Amended) An amine hardener (C) for an epoxy resin comprising: an amine adduct (A) and a low molecular weight amine compound (B) as major components[|,|];

wherein the ~~molecular weight distribution of the amine adduct (A) is obtained by a reaction between an epoxy resin (a1) and an amine compound (b1) and has a molecular weight~~ distribution, which is defined by the ratio of the weight average molecular weight and the number average molecular weight, is of 3 or lower, and

wherein the content of the low molecular weight amine compound (B) is 0.001 to 1 part by mass, based on 100 parts by mass of the amine adduct (A).

2. (Original) The hardener according to claim 1, wherein it is in solid state at 25°C.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Previously Presented) The hardener according to claim 1, wherein said low molecular weight amine compound (B) is imidazoles.

5. (Currently Amended) ~~An epoxy resin composition, comprising: a microcapsule type hardener (D)~~ A master batch type hardener (F) for an epoxy resin comprising:

~~a core and a shell, wherein said core comprising at least one kind of a hardener (C) for an epoxy resin selected from the group consisting of the hardeners according to claim 1, and said shell containing a synthetic resin or an inorganic oxide, and comprising said microcapsule type hardener (D) for an epoxy resin covering said core and 10 to 50000 parts by mass of an epoxy~~

~~resin (E), based on 100 parts by mass of said microcapsule type hardener (D), and in a master batch type hardener (F) for an epoxy resin, wherein said microcapsule type hardener (D) is dispersed in said epoxy resin (E);~~

the microcapsule type hardener (D) according to claim 19, an epoxy resin (E) and a highly soluble epoxy resin (G);

wherein [[a]] the highly soluble epoxy resin (G); ~~has~~ <sup>having</sup> a solubility parameter of 8.900 to 12.00[[,]]; ~~and~~ <sup>has</sup> a molecular weight between crosslinked points after hardening of 105 to 150[[,]]; and is contained in an amount of not lower than 0.1% by weight, based on the epoxy resin (E)[[,]]; and

wherein the total chlorine amount of said master batch type hardener (F) for an epoxy resin is not higher than 2000 ppm.

6. (Original) The epoxy resin composition according to claim 5, wherein said highly soluble epoxy resin (G) has impurity components at the diol terminals equivalent to 0.001 to 30% of fundamental structure component of said highly soluble epoxy resin.

7. (Original) The epoxy resin composition according to claim 5 or 6, wherein the total chlorine amount of said epoxy resin (E) is not higher than 2000 ppm.

8. (Currently Amended) The microcapsule type hardener (D) according to claim 19, ~~wherein the shell comprises epoxy resin composition according to claim 5, wherein said microcapsule type hardener (D) for an epoxy resin is composed of a core comprising at least one kind of a hardener (C) for an epoxy resin, selected from the group consisting of the hardeners;~~

~~which is covered with a shell comprising~~ a coating film (c1) yielded by a reaction between an isocyanate compound (H) and an active hydrogen compound (I) and/or a coating film (c2) yielded by a reaction between the amine hardener (C) ~~for an epoxy resin~~ and the an epoxy resin (E) [I.];

wherein the shell comprises ~~and is one having~~ a bonding group (x) absorbing infrared ray in a wave number region of  $1630$  to  $1680\text{ cm}^{-1}$ , and a bonding group (y) absorbing infrared ray in a wave number region of  $1680$  to  $1725\text{ cm}^{-1}$ , at least at the surface.

9. (Currently Amended) An epoxy resin composition comprising 100 parts by mass of an epoxy resin (J) and 0.1 to 100 parts by mass of an amine hardener ~~comprising at least one kind of a hardener selected from the group consisting of, which is:~~

the amine hardener (C) according to claim 1, the microcapsule type hardener (D) according to claim 19, the master batch type hardener (F) according to claim 5, or the master batch type hardener (F) according to claim 20 ~~hardeners according to claim 1, as major components.~~

10. (Currently Amended) The epoxy resin composition according to claim [I5] 9, further comprising 1 to 200 parts by mass of at least one kind of a hardener (K) selected from the group consisting of acid anhydrides, phenols, hydrazides and guanidines, based on 100 parts by mass of said epoxy resin (E).

11. (Currently Amended) The epoxy resin composition according to claim [I4] 9, further comprising ~~the microcapsule type hardener (D) for an epoxy resin, the epoxy resin (E)~~

~~and a cyclic borate ester compound (L); and wherein the amine hardener is the microcapsule type hardener (D).~~

12. (Currently Amended) The epoxy resin composition according to claim [[4]] 11, wherein said cyclic borate ester compound (L) is 2, 2'-oxybis(5,5'-dimethyl-1,3,2-dioxaborinane).

13. (Currently Amended) The epoxy resin composition according to claim [[4]] 11, wherein the ~~formulation amount of said~~ cyclic borate ester compound (L) is provided in 0.001 to 10 parts by mass, based on 100 parts by mass of said epoxy resin ~~(E)~~.

14. (Currently Amended) ~~Anisotropic~~ An anisotropic conductive material ~~characterized by containing~~ comprising the epoxy resin composition according to claim [[4]] 9.

15. (Currently Amended) A film for bonding ~~characterized by containing~~ comprising the epoxy resin composition according to claim [[4]] 9.

16. (Currently Amended) A paste for bonding a semiconductor ~~characterized by containing~~ comprising the epoxy resin composition according to claim [[4]] 9.

17. (Currently Amended) A sealant comprising ~~Sealant characterized by containing~~ the epoxy resin composition according to claim [[4]] 9.

18. (Currently Amended) ~~A structural adhesive comprising Structural adhesives~~  
~~characterized by containing~~ the epoxy resin composition according to claim [[4]] 2.

19. (New) A microcapsule type hardener (D) for an epoxy resin comprising a core and a shell;

wherein said core comprises the amine hardener (C) according to claim 1; and

wherein said shell contains a synthetic resin or an inorganic oxide.

20. (New) A master batch type hardener (F) for an epoxy resin comprising: the amine hardener (C) according to claim 1, an epoxy resin (E), and a highly soluble epoxy resin (G);

wherein the highly soluble epoxy resin (G): has a solubility parameter of 8.900 to 12.00; has a molecular weight between crosslinked points after hardening of 105 to 150; and is contained in an amount of not lower than 0.1% by weight, based on the epoxy resin (E); and wherein the total chlorine amount of said master batch type hardener (F) for an epoxy resin is not higher than 2000 ppm.